



The Thrasher

Richmond Audubon Society

RAS Meetings in Mar. and Apr. 2007

The meetings will be held at St. Luke Lutheran Church, beginning at 7:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month. The church is located at the intersection of Chippenham Parkway and Custis Road in South Richmond. The intersection is at a traffic light just east of the Huguenot Rd. exit.

Program for March 15: The March program will be presented by Nancy Ross Hugo, MS UVA, known to many Richmonders as the author of "Earth Works," in the Richmond Times-Dispatch. Most recently, Nancy also served as Education Manager at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, and is currently conducting workshops at Flower Camp in Buckingham County. Nancy will describe the Remarkable Trees of Virginia Project, an initiative to identify and celebrate Virginia's finest trees. This will be a statewide effort to identify and document the state's oldest, largest, most historic and culturally significant trees. Photographs by Robert Llewellyn (Charlottesville) of some of the trees that have been nominated to the Project so far will be shown, and Nancy will describe how to nominate a remarkable tree. *See also Zeiss Sale on Page 7.*

Program for April 19: Al Warfield, current President of RAS, will present the program for the evening. Al received his PhD in Pharmaceutical Chemistry from U of MD, and worked as a Research Scientist for three different companies. Linda Warfield, who graduated from U of MD with a BS in Nursing, will be there to add emphasis where needed and keep Al on his good behavior. The presentation will be on *The Birds of South Africa*, and will be based on a trip Al & Linda took there in August 2006. Altogether they saw

282 species of birds and photographed 200. Many of these will be shown, as well as some of the countryside and animals in KwaZuluNatal and Lesotho, a separate country in the Drakensberg Mountains. There were some scary moments as well, such as the near collision with a charging White Rhino. Other highlights include the courting dance of the African Crowned Crane. Many of the birds were South Africa or Southern Africa endemics. A few were migrants from Europe and Asia. Come and be dazzled by superb photographs of beautiful birds. You won't want to miss it! Dessert will be available after the meetings.

The Pre-meeting dinner for each meeting will start at 5:30 p.m. There is a nominal fee of \$5.00. Call or email me by the day before the meeting if you plan to be there for the dinner. 743-1479 / lindawarfield@comcast.net.

Note for those who want to come but are unsure you can make it: get your name on the list. Too much food is better than not enough! (If you can't make it, you will not be responsible for the cost.)

Reservations must be made by the evening of the day before the meeting.

Entrée items for the pre-meeting dinners are provided by some of the attendees by pre-arrangement. We always need both vegetarian and meat entrees as well as salads and side dishes. If you would like to share one of your favorite recipes with our group, call or email me by the Sunday before the meeting. Keep your receipts so I can reimburse you at the meeting. Bon Appetit!

Linda Warfield, Hospitality Chair

Sandy Wynne, Program Chair

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Notice of RAS Annual Meeting in April

The April 19th meeting of RAS will also be the Annual Meeting. This is where the Officers and Board Members for the 2007-8 fiscal year will be elected by the RAS Membership. Nominations will be open to the floor at that time, so if you have anyone in mind who could serve in one of the slots, be ready to nominate that person at the meeting. The positions and the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee are on Page 3. If you do decide to nominate someone you can contact Margaret O'Bryan, Caroline Coe, or Lori Rutledge or just do it at the meeting. Contact information is on Page 7.

The next *Thrasher* you will receive will be the May/June issue.

President's Message, March/April 2007

Having just returned from a Texas birding trip, I would like to relate some observations Linda & I made while birding there as compared to birding in Virginia. Note that nothing I say here is meant to indicate there is anything wrong with our way of doing things, but only to point out what differences we have noted, and adding a possible future action step that someone could take here in our area of the country.

Texas is huge! And some parts of the state are very different from others, the only fairly constant factor being the openness, or lack of large trees. Southeast Texas has lots of wetlands, flooded fields where rice and crawfish are cropped, and there are the birds you would expect, such as herons, egrets, kingfishers, hawks, Brewer's Blackbirds, and Boat-tailed Grackles along the roads. The Aransas – Corpus Christi area is similar but more arid, and different birds are found there. Going west and south to the Lower Rio-Grand Valley produces more changes in terrain and birds. Birding in this area is extremely good, and a number of organizations have taken advantage of that by establishing several National Wildlife Refuges, state parks, Audubon Centers, and private birding centers. These are fee-based projects. We visited 4 of them in one day and spent from \$1 to \$10 apiece at each of them. The NWRs also charge a fee, but if one has a Duck Stamp or Golden Age Pass the fee is \$0. The state parks charge about \$8-10 each unless one purchases a pass. After that we gradually birded through the Trans-Pecos area to Big Bend NP and the Davis Mountains before driving back home. Leaving the Rio-Grand Valley and crossing the Pecos River produces many more changes in terrain, plant life, and customs, but I'll leave that for a future presentation. (See Page 7 for an example.)

In the Midatlantic states there are generally no fees where we bird other than state or national parks or botanical centers. Analyzing the differences between Eastern and Western states provides at least a partial explanation though. In the East the birds tend to concentrate in wood-

ed areas, on the edges of grassy or shrubby open spaces, and in riparian areas. In most of the West there are much fewer trees, much more open space, and vegetation is shorter. The birds are more spread out, except in riparian areas, where there is more similarity to the East.

Therefore, seeing passerine birds depends on whether the landowners have provided feeders or other means to attract the birds. Sites with feeders are very diverse in types of attractions for birds, and they are large. It takes considerable labor and cost to do this, and I assume that is partially why the fees are needed. After all, these sites are self-sustaining. Another reason may be poor funding from political sources, but that's true here as well.

In Texas, they built them and the birds came, followed by the birders, who come not only from Texas, but from all over the Midwest and Northern states. Even Easterners like us birded there! The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department runs, or is developing, nine "World Birding Centers" with native plants and trees, grassy areas, and wetlands. Each facility includes a large open building with a store, meeting rooms and educational facilities. Texas Audubon has at least two similar projects that we visited, and there are other very good sites, such as the Edinburg Scenic Wetlands and the Valley Nature Center in Weslaco, which are run by local organizations.

Wouldn't it be neat if someone would start something like the birding centers we saw in Texas right here in Virginia, or even West Virginia or North Carolina? It would mean acquiring suitable land, developing it very carefully to suit the intended purpose, hiring employees to staff it, and advertising to the target audience. Fees would have to be set that would allow the project to be self-sustaining. The question in my mind is: Would birders here support refuges and centers by paying fees to bird there? I don't know the answer to that, but I know we at least would go bird there- and give it a try.

Al Warfield

Virginia Society of Ornithology 2007 Annual Meeting on the Northern Neck

'Bird Conservation in Virginia' is the theme of this year's Virginia Society of Ornithology (VSO) Annual Meeting on the Northern Neck from May 4 – 6, 2007. Dr. Bryan Watts will be the guest speaker at the banquet on Saturday evening. He is the Director of the Center for Conservation Biology at The College of William and Mary, and a leading authority on bird distribution and population dynamics. Dr. Watts will speak on *A Century of Avifaunal Change in the Mid-Atlantic: Using the Past to Clarify the Conservation Challenges of Today*.

Other weekend activities, besides the banquet, include the business meeting on Friday evening, presentations on avian research at a paper session on Saturday afternoon, and, of course, field trips on Friday afternoon and Saturday and Sunday mornings. Field trips are planned to the Stratford Hall Loop Trails, George Washington Birthplace National Monument, Westmoreland State Park, the Wilna Tract, Dameron Marsh and several other locations. Pontoon boat field trips on the most pristine portion of the tidal Rappahannock River will be offered on Friday, Saturday and Sunday or you can bring your own kayak or canoe for a field trip through the marshes of Cat Point Creek.

Meeting headquarters will be at Stratford Hall, the birthplace of Robert E. Lee, on the dolomite cliffs overlooking the Potomac River. Lodging can be arranged at several local motels or campsites. Around mid-March, more details about lodging, field trips, dining, the schedule of events, and registration information will be available on the VSO website, www.virginiabirds.net, or in the Spring issue of the VSO newsletter. You do not need to be a VSO member to attend the meeting.

Rexanne Bruno, VSO Publicity Chair

Pledge to Reduce your Carbon Footprint and also Global Warming

At the February RAS meeting, Greg Moser passed out a pledge form and asked each person or family attending to make a pledge to reduce their "Carbon Footprint" by promising to take specific steps in that direction. If you were not at the meeting, please fill out a form and send it to Greg. And keep a copy for your records.

By taking steps that would reduce the amount of carbon compounds burned each year, such as fuels, you can have a very significant effect on the carbon load that is increasing greenhouse gases, which leads to an overall increase in global temperatures. Eventually this will lead to more melting of the ice at the poles and a greatly increased rate of warming, and consequently higher sea levels and more severe weather effects. In turn, many species will be lost, maybe even a large portion of human life on earth.

The form uses average values for carbon you would prevent from reaching the stratosphere if you take the steps listed in the table. Examples are replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent ones, turning down home heating or water heaters by specific amounts, turning off lights, etc. Many of these values are very general and are not intended to be an accurate measure of how much carbon you would prevent from entering the atmosphere, but mainly a way of putting a number on what you might be able to do. Also, there are two columns into which you can place your numbers. Column A is for changes you intend to make, and Column B is for changes you have already made. Just put the numbers in the cor-

rect columns and don't worry about the totals. For example, under "Replace Washer", put a "1" into column "A" if you intend to replace it, and column "B" if you did that in the last 3 years. Don't bother with the calculations.

Also, some of the items listed may be confusing, such as "Avoid aggressive driving." This means quick stops and starts, not really "aggressive driving" *per se*. Just add a "1" in column "A" if you intend to change your driving habits. If you could have traveled by air and decided to take another form of mass transit, place a "1" under row "14 a." or "14 b." depending on the length of the flight saved. If it was already done use column "B"; otherwise use column "A".

The actual form is not included here but is available on the RAS website. See the URL below, or look for the link under "Special Announcements". You can print it from there if you don't have a copy from the meeting. Fill it out and send it to the address on the form.

http://www.richmondaudubon.org/fight_global_warming.html

Other websites are available where you can do analyses of your carbon footprint. These are listed below:

1. <http://safecimate.net/calculator/> (this is detailed)
2. <http://goodcommonsense.net/15becane.html> (simple)

If you have any questions, call Greg Moser at 358-3470.

Information from Greg Moser and John Roberts

Officers and Board Members Proposed by the RAS Nominating Committee, 2007.

Elections will be held at the April "Annual Meeting" for open positions for the 2007-8 fiscal year. Only those listed as "Proposed" under "Status" will be voted on at the April RAS meeting. Others are either "continuing" in their positions or (Co-chairs) "appointed by the President". Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. See Page 1 for details. One slot does not have a nominee assigned yet and will be filled if one becomes available. Members of the RAS Nominating Committee are: Margaret O'Bryan (Chair), Caroline Coe, and Lori Rutledge.

Position	Name	Start Date	Present Term	Status
President	Pam Dummitt	Apr-07		Proposed
1st VP	Al Warfield	Apr-05	Apr-05 - Apr-07	Continuing to 2nd term
2nd VP	vacant	Apr-07		no nominee available
Secretary	Russell Deane	Apr-07		Proposed
Treasurer	Donna Brodd	Apr-07		Proposed
Past President	Al Warfield	Apr-07		interim President in 2006-7
Conservation	John Roberts	Apr-06	Apr-06 - Apr-08	Continuing
Legislation	Margaret O'Bryan	Apr-07		Proposed
Legisl. Co-Chair	Ann Brooks	Apr-07		Appointed by President
Programs	Sandy Wynne	Apr-05	Apr-05 - Apr-07	Continuing to 2nd term
Development	Anne Dunnburg	Apr-07		Proposed
Field Trips	Penny Reynolds	Apr-07		Proposed
FT Co-Chair	Julie Kacmarcik	Apr-07		Appointed by President
Education	Bob Schamerhorn	Apr-07		Proposed
Cyberspace	Robin Ruth	Apr-01	Apr-06 - Apr-08	Continuing
Hospitality	Linda Warfield	Apr-03	Apr-06 - Apr-08	Continuing
Membership	Lori Rutledge	Apr-06		Continuing
Publicity	Greg Moser	Apr-04	Apr-06 - Apr-08	Continuing
Thrasher Ed.	Al Warfield	Apr-01	Apr-05 - Apr-07	Continuing
Youth	Robin Ruth	Sept-06	Apr-06-Apr-08	Continuing
Youth Co-Chair	Mary Arginteanu	Sept-06		Appointed by President

Field Trips & Work Days: March - April 2007

Winter/Spring Pelagics— Sea birding with Brian Patteson: Check out Brian's website and choose a date for a memorable pelagic trip out into the Atlantic that is almost certain to add new entries to your Life List!!
<http://www.seabirding.com/>

Sunday, March 4, 2007 – Bryan Park with Sue Ridd: Plan on spending the start of the first Sunday in March birding with Sue Ridd at Bryan Park. Meet at Shelter #1 at 7:07 a.m. (1/2 hour after sunrise). Questions? Call Sue at 270-5365.

Saturday, March 10, 2007 – James River National Wildlife Refuge, Prince George County: Come on out and participate in a Volunteer Work Day. Help demolish an old dilapidated house and prepare the site for a new kiosk and wildlife garden. Food, drinks, and nature tour will be provided. Please contact Cyrus Brame, US Fish and Wildlife Service, at cyrus_brame@fws.gov, or call 829-9020, to register.

Sunday, March 11, 2007 – Daylight Savings Time begins. Note the earlier start as our clocks "spring" forward an hour.

Wednesday, March 14, 2007 – 2nd Wednesday Walk with John Coe. John will be exploring and walking in Forest Hill Park, Richmond. The trip will start at 8 a.m. Call John at 276-1396 for additional information.

Saturday - Sunday, March 24 - 25, 2007: Highland County, Virginia. A late winter wonderland, Highland County promises a good chance of finding Golden Eagles, Rough-legged Hawks, Pine Siskins and more. The field trips will start Saturday morning. The Highland Inn and the Mont Vallee are the two local spots to stay in Monterey. For details, meeting times and to register for this trip, contact Julie Kacmarcik at 530-3660.

Saturday, March 24, 2007 – Presquile National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Work Day: Help install the items recently acquired from the USFWS/Audubon Friends Grant (awarded by the NFWF). Some of the

tasks will include erecting interpretive/directional signs, removing fencing, refurbishing the Visitor Contact Station and working on the observation platform. Contact Cyrus Brame, US Fish and Wildlife Service, at cyrus_brame@fws.gov, or call 829-9020, to register.

Saturday, March 31, 2007 – Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, Richmond: Tyler Terpin will lead a bird walk in the early spring gardens. The walk will begin at 8 a.m. and will cost \$6 per person for non-LGBG members. This trip requires advanced registration, so call Tyler at 270-6921 by the 29th to sign up. At least 4 people must sign up or trip will be cancelled.

April 2007 – Maymont-VCU Discovery Institute: Historical Perspectives on Birding along the James River "In celebration of Jamestown 2007" and RAS Field trips along the James: See the article on Page 5.

Sunday, April 1, 2007 – Bryan Park with Sue Ridd: Take an April Fool's walk around Bryan Park with Sue. Meet at Shelter #1 at 7:30 a.m. Questions? Call Sue at 270-5365.

Fridays April 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2007 – The Wetlands before Work (WBW): Join Mary Arginteanu and Larry Robinson at the Wetlands entrance on Landria Drive at 7 a.m. Track spring arrivals before hitting the rock pile. For more information, contact Mary at 320-0138.

Wednesday, April 11, 2007 – 2nd Wednesday Walk with John Coe. John will be birding at Deep Bottom Boat Landing in Henrico County in search of early spring migrants. The trip will meet at 7:30 a.m. Call John at 276-1396 for additional information.

Sunday April 22, 2007 – The Great Dismal Swamp, Suffolk, Virginia: Meet Darrell Peterson at 5:30 a.m. at the parking lot at Bermuda Square in Chester at Route 301 and Route 10 for our annual pilgrimage to the Great Dismal Swamp. The target bird is the Swainson's Warbler. Be prepared for

lots of walking, mosquitoes and ubiquitous bird song. No facilities; bring water, snacks, and bug spray. Contact Darrell at 276-9354 if you have any questions.

Saturday, April 28, 2007 – Ashland Trolley Line, Hanover County: Join Linda and Bob Cole to bird one of our favorite Hanover locations. The Cole list of spring migrants passing through their property is awesome! Meet at Luck Chevrolet on Rt 1 in Ashland (5 miles north of Greentop Sporting Goods) at 6:30 a.m. Call the Coles at 798-6618 with any questions.
 Sunday, May 6, 2007 – Bryan Park with Sue Ridd: Take a spring walk around Bryan Park with Sue and look for all the spring migrants, decked out in their breeding plumage and singing their best songs as they pass through Richmond. Meet at Shelter #1 at 6:39 a.m. Questions? Call Sue at 270-5365.

Coming up in May:
 Merchant's Mill pond
 Piney Grove
 RAS Birdathon
 VSO Annual Meeting (see Page 2)
 Mountain Lake Birding Festival, May 18-20, 2007

Note: all phone numbers in area code 804 unless indicated

Julie Kacmarcik
Caroline Coe



Maymont-VCU Discovery Institute: April 2007

As part of the Maymont & VCU spring lecture series this year, Historical Perspectives on Birding along the James River – “In Celebration of Jamestown 2007”, Four superb Thursday lectures have been scheduled at the Maymont Nature Center. The lectures will begin at 7 p.m., and are preceded by a reception at 6 pm. All are free and open to the public. (No registration necessary.)

The Lectures are as follows:

April 5: *Landscape changes over 400 years and their effects on Birds* – Dr. Sergio Harding.

April 12: *Jewel of the Wetlands: The Prothonotary Warbler, Past and Present* – Dr. Robert Reilly

April 19: *The James River, a Gem in the Recovery of the Bald Eagle* – Dr. Mitchell Byrd

April 26: *John James Audubon, his Virginia Travels, and his Enduring Art* – Mr. William Steiner.

Richmond Audubon has partnered with Maymont and VCU to lead 4 Saturday field trips April 7, 14, 21, 28 at locations along Rt 5, the historic James River corridor, to compliment the lectures. The field trips will require advanced registration. Call Maymont at 358-7166 x325 or mrich@maymont.org

The field trips will be:

April 7: Presquile National Wildlife Refuge

April 14: Westover/Berkeley Plantations

April 21: VCU Rice Center

April 28: Dutch Gap Conservation Area

Please put some of these dates on your spring calendar

Nature Camp Lives!

Few experiences have had a more profound impact in shaping who I am and clarifying those values I hold most dear than Nature Camp — the much beloved and highly respected summer nature study camp located within George Washington National Forest near Vesuvius, Virginia. Founded by Lillian Schilling 64 years ago and supported throughout its entire history by the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs (VFGC), Nature Camp provides young people 11-18 an extraordinary opportunity to study the natural world through field observation as well as library and laboratory research. Daily lectures and follow-up hikes include study offerings in astronomy, botany, entomology, geology, herpetology, limnology, ornithology, and other areas. Evening and special programs reinforce the daily teaching of reverence for each link in our natural ecosystems and the critical role each of us must play to preserve our natural world. After fledging, generations of Camp alumni continue to provide leadership in the sciences and environmental protection and conservation.

It is understandable, then, that news of the decision of the VFGC Board of Directors in September 2006 that the Federation could no longer provide financial support to Nature Camp and, further, to cease Nature Camp operations hit all who love Camp like a meteor. The difficult business decision was largely in response to a growing imbalance between anticipated revenues and expenditures related to the operation of and requisite capital improvements for Camp, not to concerns regarding the Nature Camp mission.

The Nature Camp Foundation (NCF), an independent organization formed in 1989 to support Camp, initiated a rapid response. At an October 2006 meeting convened by the NCF and attended by over 200 alumni and friends of Camp, we agreed overwhelmingly that Nature Camp should live on. The Foundation is now seeking a transfer of Nature Camp ownership from the VFGC to the NCF, as well as a new Special Use Permit from the U.S. Forest Service for Camp's continued operations, including sessions in

summer 2007.

How can you help to ensure the future of Nature Camp? Please visit the Foundation's Website at www.naturecampfoundation.org for information on the Campaign for Nature Camp and its related resource development opportunities. Additionally, if you know a young person who is a potential candidate to attend Nature Camp for the first time, please visit www.naturecamp.net for applications, fees, dates, and other pertinent information.

The Foundation looks forward to continuing new partnerships with the VFGC as well as countless new supporters as, together, we work to ensure the future of Nature Camp.

Nancy Ambler

From The Kitchen Window – March / April 2007

"March comes and the sap quickens down at the root of life. Buds, set on the twig last summer, begin to swell toward April. In the woodland's litter and debris there is a slight stir. Ice melts on warm afternoons. Water begins to flow. Chill darkness checks the slow awakening, but another day starts the deliberate throb again, the slight breath of change, the incredible, inevitable renaissance of life."
Hal Borland

The thin crescent moon is a mere wisp as the light of dawn dissolves the darkness of night. The Barred Owl makes a single call, and waits for an answer from its mate. By now they have chosen a nest site where they can raise their young. By the light of the kitchen window, we hope. A Carolina Wren responds to the owl's call and sings his morning song which, perhaps, tugs on the bright red feathers of an awakening cardinal. And it is the song of the cardinal, his notes as pretty as the blush in the eastern sky, that says to the other birds a new season is here. Winter was a little late getting here this year, and we have had a mere dusting of snow [as of this writing – which our editor will attest is at least two days (as always) beyond it's due date]. The birds have not minded, but I do miss those visits of northern-feathered friends from previous years. No redpolls, Pine Siskins, Purple Finches, Evening Grosbeaks, and we have had only a passing glimpse of a kinglet and only one Yellow-rumped Warbler, but lots of White-throated Sparrows and Dark-eyed Juncos

The view from the window is changing. Our wild critters – from Bees to Bats to Bears-are telling us to quit cutting down stuff, and quit warming things up.

The Full Moon in March will occur on the 3rd. It is called the Worm Moon, or sometimes the Egg Moon, and will rise totally eclipsed.

On March 11th Daylight Savings Time will begin at 2 a.m. Spring your clocks ahead an hour.

The Vernal Equinox occurs at 8:07 p.m. – start of spring in the Northern hemisphere.

In April the Full Moon, called the Pink Moon or the Milk Moon, will occur at 1:15 p.m. on the 2nd

John Coe

Westmoreland County RAS Field Trip, February 3, 2007

Ten birders visited George Washington's Birthplace National Monument and the Town of Colonial Beach on this trip, and were rewarded with seeing 44 species of birds.



Bald Eagle sightings from distances of half a mile or less were too numerous to mention. They began with an adult eagle carrying a squirrel carcass, right in front of the group, as we were driving on Route 3 on the way to the park. Two eagles were seen on the first trip to the beach, and when the Visitor Center and its parking lot opened at 9 a.m., another was seen in the inlet. Tundra Swans, rafts of American Coots and Ruddy Ducks, and a few Red-breasted Mergansers were seen in the inlet from the Visitor Center deck and the trail onto the cliff by the Historic Area. Everyone got to see a pair of Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers several times, and the pair was only 10 to 20 feet from the group. The second trip to the beach, this time with a

spotting scope in use, revealed a few Surf Scooters, Buffleheads and American Coots.

An adult eagle was flying over the Potomac River and portions of the town of Colonial Beach as we started to leave our cars to go to the coffee shop in the town. This was after we went to the end of the entrance road to the town (Colonial Avenue) which dead ends at the Potomac and saw Surf Scooters from only 20 feet away.

After lunch we birded the waterfront road (Irving Avenue) from several public parking lots. Hundreds of Ruddy Ducks, some scaup, and two pairs of Canvasback Ducks were seen. A group of Hooded Mergansers was seen in Monroe Bay from the parking lot of the Public Boat Landing.

Some birders were able to take photos of waterfowl species not often seen in camera range. Hope to see more participants next year on this very productive trip.

Tyler Turpin

Canvasback photo by Al Warfield

Officers / Committee Chairs and Co-chairs for 2006-7

Acting President	Al Warfield	warfield101@comcast.net	677-3758
1st Vice President	vacant		
2nd Vice President	Pam Dummitt	pamdummitt@yahoo.com	353-3571
Secretary	Donna Brodd	drbrodd@aol.com	262-7040
Treasurer/Finance	Sue Ridd	s.ridd@att.net	270-5365
Past President	Margaret O'Bryan	catbird329@comcast.net	746-5599
Development	Bob Wynne	sswynne@verizon.net	276-5520
Thrasher Editor	Al Warfield	warfield101@comcast.net	677-3758
Education	John Coe	johnwcoe@verizon.net	276-1397
Field Trips	Julie Kacmarcik Caroline Coe	juliekazz@comcast.net cccocoe@verizon.net	530-3660 276-1397
Hospitality	Linda Warfield	lindawarfield@comcast.net	743-1479
Conservation	John Roberts	call for email address	329-6879
Legislation	vacant		
Membership	Lori Rutledge	lorirutledge8@aol.com	310-9014
Cyberspace	Robin Ruth	robin.ruth@att.net	231-5949
Programs	Sandy Wynne	sswynne@verizon.net	276-5520
Publicity	Greg Moser	vtsec11@juno.com	358-3470
Youth	Robin Ruth Mary Arginteanu	robin.ruth@att.net maryarg@aol.com	231-5949 320-0138
VA Audubon Council Rep	Lewis Barnett	lbarnett@richmond.edu	320-7898

Important Notices

RAS meetings are on the 3rd Thursday of every month except June, July, August and December. Meetings are held at St. Luke Lutheran Church at Custis Rd. and Chippenham Parkway.

The Thrasher will be printed 7 times in 2007: Jan./Feb., Mar./Apr., May/Jun, Jul./Aug., Sept., Oct, Nov./Dec.

Editor's Note: Please submit articles by the 15th of the month before each issue.
Email: warfield101@comcast.net
Surface mail: Al Warfield, *The Thrasher* Editor, 4749 Southmoor Road, Richmond VA 23234.

Thanks to these Thrasher Volunteers:
Linda Warfield: Labels & proofreading
Patrick Hickey & Jean Adams: Mailing

The Thrasher is printed on recycled paper

Notice: *The Thrasher* no longer contains ads

Zeiss Optics Sale at the March 15 RAS Meeting

Zeiss Sports Optics, who have supported RAS for several years by donating binoculars to the RAS Auction, donating \$1,000 to the Birdathon in 2006, and have promised support again in 2007 for a Birdathon team, will be at the March RAS meeting with demo optical equipment for sale. The equipment will consist of binoculars and spotting scopes primarily plus a few other items. All products will carry their lifetime warranties and will be payable by check, cash or charge. Not only will the products be discounted to us, Zeiss will give a portion of their proceeds back to Richmond Audubon. If you need a new scope or pair of binoculars, or maybe a gift for someone who would appreciate Zeiss quality optics, be ready to make a decision at the meeting on March 15. All the items have been field tested by birders, hunters, journalists, etc., and are basically new.

A Black-throated Sparrow displays in the Chihuahuan Desert at Burro Mesa Pouroff in Big Bend National Park, Southwest Texas. One of over 170 species seen by Al & Linda Warfield on their recent late winter trip to several areas in Texas. See President's Message on Page 2 for more on birding in Southwest Texas. Photo by Al Warfield.





Membership Corner

Richmond Audubon Society Chapter offers birding field trips, interesting programs, and opportunities to meet and network with a great group of birding enthusiasts. Check out our web site or come to a meeting to find out how you can get involved to protect our precious natural resources and wildlife. New members, attendance at your first RAS dinner/meeting is on us! Contact Linda Warfield, Hospitality Chair, to make your reservations.

Welcome new members! We look forward to meeting you at one of our many upcoming meetings and field trips. Don't hesitate to introduce yourself as we are a friendly group of bird enthusiasts!

Member Benefit! As a member of the National Audubon Society, you automatically become a member of the Richmond Audubon Society Chapter. This also applies to National Audubon Society members who transfer-in to the Richmond area and surrounding counties from other Audubon local chapters. Presently, no additional application forms and membership fees are required. Use the extra dollars saved to feed the birds or support one of our many conservation efforts.

Keep your membership contact information and membership status current, ON-LINE! As a member of the National Audubon Society, you can access and update personal information and renew membership status through the National Audubon Society's website at: <https://websvr.audubon.org/forms/updated/login.html>. Updates and membership status changes are made available to local chapter officers through on-line reports.

Happy Birding!

Lori Rutledge, Membership Chair

Richmond Audubon Society
P.O. Box 26648
Richmond, VA 23261



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NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY Chapter Membership Application

Yes, please enroll me (us) as a **new** member(s) of both National and Richmond Audubon Societies at the address below, **at the introductory rate**. Also included are subscriptions to the NAS magazine, *Audubon*, and the RAS newsletter, *The Thrasher*. (Make checks payable to National Audubon Society. And write "X53" on the check).

___ Individual/Family Member(s) \$20 enclosed

___ Student/Senior Member \$15 enclosed

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Phone ____/____

E-mail address: _____

Send your check and application to:
Richmond Audubon Society
c/o Membership Chair, Lori Rutledge
5306 Snowden La.
Richmond, VA 23226-2038

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The Thrasher

the newsletter of the Richmond Audubon Society.

The Richmond Audubon society promotes the enjoyment, understanding, and preservation of birds, other wildlife, and habitat through education, advocacy, and fellowship.